CLES

Centre for Local
Economic Strategies

February 2014

***COMMUNITY COHESION AND RESILIENCE - ACKNOWLEDGING THE ROLE AND
CONTRIBUTION OF HOUSING PROVIDERS***

Final report prepared by

Centre for Local Economic Strategies

Presented to

Housing Diversity Network

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

The Housing Diversity Network (HDN) are longstanding members of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES). As part of HDN's membership with CLES, HDN receive a range of CLES materials and publications, a monthly briefing on equality and diversity issues and the opportunity to request wider bespoke briefings to be produced. The purpose of this bespoke briefing paper is to identify the factors affecting community cohesion and community resilience and develop recommendations for how housing providers can encourage greater resilience in their localities.

Community cohesion and resilience is widely considered to be an important factor for residents to feel satisfied with where they live. This is because residents in a cohesive and resilient community tend to feel supported by those around them, feel a sense of belonging, and socialise with others in their community, all of which are important for a person's mental health and social well-being. Cohesive and resilient communities are also less likely to experience neighbourhood problems, such as anti-social behaviour, crime and waste mismanagement.

It is clearly in the interest of housing providers to be aware of the factors which affect the cohesion and resilience of a community since residents living in a cohesive community are less likely to move away and there will be fewer problems for housing providers to address, such as anti-social behaviour and population churn. In order to assist housing providers to understand how they can promote cohesive and resilient communities, this research explores the factors affecting cohesion and resilience; and the actions housing providers can take to promote cohesion in their neighbourhoods.

The term 'community cohesion' has fallen out of favour in recent years as policymakers have turned their attention to issues of 'integration' and 'resilience'. These three concepts do however overlap greatly and the decline in interest in 'cohesion' does not mean that community tension has disappeared. Indeed, the contrary is more likely given the 2011 London riots which brought the breakdown in community relations across the UK sharply into focus. The difference is that poor community cohesion is now understood to be caused largely by socio-economic deprivation rather than differences in ethnic groups.

This research aims to draw on the lessons from the community cohesion literature and apply them to the community tensions housing providers are witnessing as a result of the economic recession and cuts to public services and welfare support (amongst other factors). Throughout the report we interchange between the use of the term community cohesion when referring to historic activities and community resilience when referring to contemporary activities. The findings of the work have been drawn from a literature and policy review; a focus group with equality and diversity practitioners in the South and South West of England (hosted by Southwark Homes on 10th December 2013); and a survey of the HDN membership base. A list of participating organisations is detailed in Appendix 1.

The format of this briefing paper is as follows:

1) Definitions of terms related to community cohesion (this is supplemented by a policy review in Appendix 2);

2) Typology of factors affecting community cohesion and community resilience specific to the role of housing providers;

3) Examples of how Housing Diversity Network members and other housing providers have been working to promote cohesion and resilience in their local communities;

4) Recommendations for how housing providers can assess and take action in creating resilient communities.

This report is accompanied by a practical framework (detailed in Appendix 3) to assist housing providers to assess and promote community cohesion and community resilience. Housing Diversity Network will be able to share the framework with its member organisations to encourage them to consider the cohesion and resilience of the communities they work in.

2   DEFINITIONS

Before exploring the factors affecting community cohesion and community resilience, it is important to examine the terms and definitions used to describe it and related concepts. These terms are frequently used interchangeably and it is useful to clarify the definitions used in this research.

2.1.1   Community cohesion

Community cohesion, also called 'social cohesion', is generally used to refer to the notion of people in a locality getting on well together. As the term has developed, it has become broader, including ideas of a shared identity, a respect for cultural differences, high levels of social interaction, civic engagement and people having similar life opportunities.

The most recent government definition of cohesion states that[1];

"Community cohesion is what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. A key contributor to community cohesion is integration which is what must happen to enable new residents and existing residents to adjust to one another.

Our vision of an integrated and cohesive community is based on three foundations:
- ❑   People from different backgrounds having similar life opportunities;
- ❑   People knowing their rights and responsibilities;
- ❑   People trusting one another and trusting local institutions to act fairly;

And three ways of living together:
- ❑   A shared future vision and sense of belonging;
- ❑   A focus on what new and existing communities have in common, alongside a recognition of the value of diversity; and
- ❑   Strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds."

This definition clearly reflects current policy priorities to encourage people of different cultural backgrounds to form positive relationships and develop a shared identity. While it mentions respect for diversity, there is a focus on the development of shared citizenship and trust in the social contract[2]. This has become increasingly important following the 2011 London riots and on-going concern over the rise of public anti-immigration sentiments.

While reducing racism and violent extremism is evidently high on the government's agenda, this research recognises that community cohesion is not only about race and religion. Where the definition uses the word 'backgrounds', this should refer to all cultural differences, including age, sexuality, disability and socio-economic groups. For housing providers, the most important aspects of cohesion are the relationships between people of different cultural identities and their willingness to support each other and have a shared sense of belonging and pride in their locality.

2.1.2   Community integration

Closely related to the concept of cohesion, is the term 'integration'. According to the UK government, integration means "creating the conditions for everyone to play a full part in national and local life"[3]. While the definition uses the word 'everyone', the focus of interventions to promote 'integration' is on the relationships between people of different nationalities and ethnic backgrounds. Integration is generally used in policy to refer to the inclusion of migrants into British society, whether this is through multiculturalism or assimilation. Integration is now used by the Department for Communities and Local Government to describe relationships between migrants and other residents and the department argues that integration is a key contributor to community cohesion[4].

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[1] Department for Communities and Local Government, 2008. *The Government's Response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion*

[2] Ted Cantle, 2013. *About Community Cohesion*, Icoco Foundation http://tedcantle.co.uk/resources-and-publications/about-community-cohesion/

[3] Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012. *Creating the Conditions for Integration*, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7504/2092103.pdf

[4] The Migration Observatory, 2011. *Policy Primer: Integration*, Oxford University, http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/migobs/Integration%20Policy%20Primer.pdf

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2.1.3   Community resilience

The term community resilience is often used when discussing integration and cohesion. Resilience is defined in different ways but with respect to community resilience, it describes the extent to which a community is able to adapt to shocks and changes. The Young Foundation describes a resilient community as one that has "a collectively held belief in their ability to adapt and thrive in spite of adversity. Individuals activate relationships with their peers, with networks and state structures to capitalise on dormant and existing capacity". In relation to cohesion, community resilience is often used to refer to the ability of a community to adapt to the influx of a new migrant group and the process of getting used to the cultural changes which this brings. It could, however, also be used to describe the ability of a community to adapt to an economic shock which might strain community relations.

2.1.4   Social cohesion

In addition to community cohesion, the term 'social cohesion' is also used to refer to how well people who live in the same area get along with each other. However, while social cohesion refers to how well individuals are integrated into their local ethnic or religious community, community cohesion describes how well these micro-communities are knitted together as a whole. The focus of community cohesion is therefore on the existence of shared social values which enable all communities to work together for common goals and to feel a sense of belonging and citizenship[5].

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[5] Robinson, D. 2004. *Communities and Cohesion: What's housing got to do with it?*, The Housing Studies Association Spring Conference, Sheffield Hallam University, 15th and 16th April 2004

3   FACTORS AFFECTING COMMUNITY COHESION AND RESILIENCE

It is evident from the way in which the concept of cohesion has developed that there are numerous interrelated social and economic factors affecting community cohesion and community resilience. While differences in ethnicity and socio-economic status are cited most frequently, there are a number of further issues which affect community relations. These are explored in further detail in this section.

3.1   Factors affecting community cohesion and community resilience

The key factors affecting community cohesion and community resilience can be summarised as:

- ❑   Socio-economic status and deprivation;
- ❑   Ethnic diversity;
- ❑   National and local politics;
- ❑   Population change;
- ❑   Sense of identity and belonging;
- ❑   Physical segregation;
- ❑   Crime;
- ❑   Civic participation and volunteering;
- ❑   Local institutions and organisations;
- ❑   Access to services and facilities;
- ❑   Kinship and friendship networks.

The following paragraphs provide an overview of how the key factors described above can have a positive or negative impact on community cohesion and community resilience.

3.1.1   Socio-economic status and deprivation

According to numerous studies, a crucial factor affecting community cohesion and resilience is socio-economic status. A comprehensive study[6] of the predicators of poor community cohesion found that disadvantage (i.e. low economic status) is a negative predictor of cohesion. Disadvantage was found to lower perceptions of cohesion across all types of communities as disadvantage usually entails job insecurity, poor quality employment and limited access to goods and services which creates animosity and scape-goating[7]. A report published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation[8] found that where serious tensions developed between residents, these were mostly due to a struggle for resources, such as employment and housing. Tension and resentment is found to be particularly pronounced in communities where there is a wide inequality gap.

With regard to current changes to welfare, high levels of unemployment, and rising living costs, disadvantage and deprivation pose a serious risk to community cohesion and resilience. This is especially relevant to social landlords as many of their tenants are likely to have their income reduced due to welfare reform. If tenants fall into rent arrears and fail to find adequate employment, community tension may rise as individuals feel under threat and anti-social behaviour and crime may also rise.

The changes to welfare reform have given rise to a 'shirkers vs. strivers' debate in which the working poor have been pitched against the unemployed and people claiming welfare benefits have been blamed for high public spending. This may create community tension as people consider their neighbours to be undeserving of welfare support. Related to this is the increase in hate crime towards people with disabilities who have also been presented as work-shy and undeserving of welfare support.

3.1.2   Ethnic diversity

The effect of ethnic diversity on cohesion and resilience is complicated. While ethnic diversity is commonly cited as a cause of community tension, recent research shows that ethnic diversity can be positively associated with community cohesion[9]. Individuals forming relationships across ethnic

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[6] DCLG, 2008. *Predictors of community cohesion: multi-level modelling of the 2005 Citizenship Survey.*
[7] Community and deprivation
[8] Hudson, M., Phillips, J., Ray, K. and Barnes, H., 2007. *Social cohesion in diverse communities*. JRF: York
[9] DCLG, 2008. *Predictors of community cohesion: multi-level modelling of the 2005 Citizenship Survey.*

groups has been found to create a sense of cohesion. However, in communities where there is an increasing presence of migrants from minority ethnic groups, particularly in locations where there has been little in-migration previously, community tensions can arise[10]. Cultural symbolism and culturally specific dress can pose barriers to integration as ethnic groups are perceived to be visually different to others.

Community tension between different ethnic groups is more likely to occur when there is limited interaction between the new and existing communities and where the existing residents feel their culture or economic resources are threatened by the in-migration of a new community[11]. This is often the case in areas experiencing deprivation, where residents feel insecure about their access to resources and so are more likely to perceive the arrival of migrants as a threat. For example, it has been found that resentment towards refugees and asylum seekers on the part of existing communities is driven by a belief that the new arrivals do not contribute to the local area and are given preferential access to state resources. Such sentiments have been found to unite long-standing communities of different ethnic groups against new migrant groups[12].

3.1.3   National and local politics

Negative attitudes towards particular social groups can be fuelled by national or local level politics. The rise of far-right political organisations, such as the success of the British National Party at local elections, can spread animosity between particular groups which damages community cohesion[13]. The media has been found to drive such negative attitudes through inaccurate, politicised reports describing different social groups in negative language[14]. Likewise, discussions in the media which conflate issues related to multiculturalism, extremism and terrorism can reinforce intolerance and suspicion among white communities of minority ethnic groups.

Local politics and the transposing of viewpoints from national groups to local groups can also be a cause of community tension. Elections at which a perceived extremist group is standing can be a cause of tension, as can their means of campaigning through leafleting and meetings. A lack of trust in local politics to adequately represent the interests of all communities and a limited ability to influence local decision-making may also lead to tensions within communities who feel marginalised or attacked by politics.

3.1.4   Population change

The arrival of new ethnic groups in areas with previously low levels of in migration has been found to disrupt community relations but this rise in community tension is due to population churn as well as difference in ethnicity. Decline in community cohesion is commonly found in areas where the labour and housing markets have changed[15]. Older residents in these areas often express nostalgia for the past and resentment towards the new communities. These could be poorer households, international migrants or wealthier people who can afford newly gentrified housing now out of reach of the older residents. An influx of younger residents can also cause intergenerational tension due to generational differences in education, social norms, and lifestyles.

Housing providers may experience changes in their tenant population due to the under-occupancy penalty or 'bedroom tax'. Changes to the welfare system and reductions in benefit payments, in particular through the bedroom tax mean that households may choose to relocate to smaller, cheaper properties. CLES has undertaken research into the expected population churn in Manchester, comparing the wards which will be most affected by the bedroom tax with the wards which have the greatest supply of more affordable housing. This highlighted the areas which are most likely to experience population churn so that housing providers and the local authority could mitigate any negative consequences of the in- and out-migration. It is not yet clear to what extent affected households will decide to relocate, but if there is significant population churn in social housing, community cohesion and resilience is likely to be weakened in these areas.

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[10] DCLG, 2008. *Predictors of community cohesion: multi-level modelling of the 2005 Citizenship Survey.*
[11] Hudson, M., Phillips, J., Ray, K. and Barnes, H., 2007. *Social cohesion in diverse communities.* JRF: York
[12] Hudson, M., Phillips, J., Ray, K. and Barnes, H., 2007. *Social cohesion in diverse communities.* JRF: York
[13] Housing market renewal
[14] Bhavnani, R., Mirza, H.S. and Meetoo, V. 2005. *Tackling the Roots of Racism: Lessons for Success.* Bristol: Policy Press In: Hudson, M., Phillips, J., Ray, K. and Barnes, H., 2007. *Social cohesion in diverse communities.* JRF: York
[15] DCLG, 2008. *Predictors of community cohesion: multi-level modelling of the 2005 Citizenship Survey.*

3.1.5 Sense of identify and belonging

Identify and belonging is at the heart of community cohesion and resilience since having a shared sense of belonging is very important for a community to identify itself as a community. Where individuals within a community feel that their identity is threatened by the presence of a new group living in the same area, tensions and resentment towards the newcomers can arise. A study of right-wing extremism in Europe found that radical right-wing groups are driven by a conviction that immigrants and increasing cultural diversity in general threaten national and community identity[16]. This sense of cultural threat may be heightened by the presence of institutions related to a specific faith or cultural group and a perceived lack of openness may breed community tension.

A further factor related to community identity is inter-ethnic tension over conflicts in other regions of the world. Commentators have suggested that the actions of the UK in foreign conflicts can foster anti-Western, or specifically anti-British sentiments among individuals and social groups[17]. It has been argued that UK government involvement in countries, such as Iraq and Afghanistan and its position on conflicts in places, such as Syria, Mali and Gaza create feelings of injustice and persecution which affect communities resident in the UK.

3.1.6 Physical segregation

Following the riots in Oldham, the Oldham Independent Review Panel (2001) reported that "the segregated nature of society in Oldham is at the heart of the town's problems, and that begins with housing." The Review Team found that while some minority ethnic groups choose to live closely together, choosing where to live can also be heavily influenced by housing policy and provision[18].

Factors such as a lack of unaffordable housing or fear of harassment can determine where different groups choose to live and can lead to frustration at not being able to access better housing in better areas. The Denham Report argues that this physical segregation of ethnic groups can lead to tension between them. However, other research shows that even when different ethnic groups live in close proximity to each other, there may still be little social interaction across cultural diversity which can allow resentment of the other to build up[19].

The geographic location of a community can also create a sense of segregation. Some housing providers have found that cohesion can be more difficult in rural communities, despite public policy usually focusing on inner-city areas. This can be due to poor transport connections to employment opportunities, schools, and services which are too far away to reach on foot. This is especially significant for families for whom public transport is prohibitively expensive. Communities in rural areas are also more likely to be insular and have little experience of other social or cultural groups which can lead to greater cohesion issues if there is a population change.

3.1.7 Crime

Crime and fear of crime are found to strongly undermine community cohesion and resilience. Fear of being a victim of crime or a racist attack has been found to be especially damaging to community cohesion in areas with large White and large Pakistani and Bangladeshi populations[20]. However, if fear of crime decreases and confidence in policing increases, perceptions of community cohesion are likely to improve[21].

3.1.8 Civic Participation and volunteering

There are numerous factors which have a positive influence on community cohesion and resilience, one of which is civic participation. Research has found that communities where individuals feel they can influence local decisions also have good community cohesion. Likewise, if individuals feel unable

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[16] Goodwin, M. 2011. *Right Response: Understanding and Countering Populist Extremism in Europe*, Chatham House

[17] London Borough of Hounslow, 2007. *A Window On Extremism: young people in Hounslow -a study of identity, social pressures, extremism and social exclusion*

[18] Robinson, D. 2004. *Communities and Cohesion: What has housing got to do with it?*, The Housing Studies Association Spring Conference, Sheffield Hallam University, 15th and 16th April 2004

[19] Hudson, M., Phillips, J., Ray, K. and Barnes, H. 2007. *Social cohesion in diverse communities*. JRF: York

[20] DCLG, 2008. *Predictors of community cohesion: multi-level modelling of the 2005 Citizenship Survey.*

[21] Cooper, H. and Innes, M. 2009. *The Causes and Consequences of Community Cohesion in Wales: A Secondary Analysis*, Cardiff: Cardiff University School of Social Sciences

to engage with local authorities and feel unfairly treated, cohesion is likely to be low[22]. This may be because strong social bonds are required for individuals to mobilise and so areas with poor cohesion also struggle to act on local issues. Cohesion and community mobilisation are both negatively affected by multiple deprivation and so tackling poverty and deprivation in a community may have positive outcomes for both cohesion and civic participation.

Like civic participation, volunteering has strong positive outcomes for cohesion and community resilience. Volunteering often makes individuals feel empowered and helps them to form friendships with people in their community who they would not otherwise be in contact with. One study found that for Pakistani and Bangladeshi people, informal volunteering was particularly helpful for increasing community cohesion[23].

With respect to housing providers, tenants' groups offer an opportunity for residents to be engaged in decision-making over local issues. The openness and representativeness of these groups can be an important indicator of community cohesion and resilience. If residents feel that only a certain type of tenant is welcome in the group, this can damage perceptions of cohesion whereas if the group is open and active, this can foster a sense of community and empowerment.

3.1.9   Local institutions and organisations

Community cohesion and resilience can be increased through the presence of community organisations which bring people from different groups together in a relaxed and neutral space. Research has found that sports and leisure facilities, residents' associations and schools can help to bring people together[24]. Community and voluntary sector organisations are also important for creating spaces in which people of different backgrounds can get to know one another. The voluntary sector is particularly well-placed for encouraging community cohesion because local voluntary organisations are likely to know their community well, be connected to various groups within their community and be respected by the local community[25].

The Local Government Association (LGA) recognises the importance of the voluntary and community sector in promoting community cohesion due to its knowledge of local communities and issues. The LGA stated that 'an organisation working at the neighbourhood level can offer unrivalled insight into the perceptions of local people about their community'[26]. Likewise, the Department for Communities and Local Government and ICoCo consider voluntary sector organisations to be more trusted than the public sector by certain groups, which places these organisations in an important position for reaching out and engaging with communities which are further from mainstream institutions[27].

Housing providers are evidently local organisations which share common characteristics of voluntary sector organisations given their close contact with different groups in a community and their knowledge of local issues. Housing providers can also host or create community groups which bring residents together for social activities and shared interests. Creating such spaces for informal interaction can be important in fostering positive relationships between residents of different backgrounds and so foster greater community cohesion.

3.1.10 Access to facilities and services

Community infrastructure and services can also influence the cohesion of a community. For example, important services, such as mental health support and drug and substance abuse services need to be available locally to prevent health issues creating community tension. In communities where access to facilities and services is perceived to favour one group over another, resentment can grow. This is especially likely in areas of deprivation where there is a high level of dependency on local services and facilities and where the supply of such support is stretched. In response to the community cohesion agenda, some areas have moved away from culturally specific service provision to providing a more mixed provision. This can facilitate the mixing of people from different

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[22] Cooper, H. and Innes, M. 2009. *The Causes and Consequences of Community Cohesion in Wales: A Secondary Analysis*, Cardiff: Cardiff University School of Social Sciences

[23] DCLG, 2008. *Predictors of community cohesion: multi-level modelling of the 2005 Citizenship Survey.*

[24] Jayaweera, H. & Choudhury, T., 2008. *Immigration, faith and cohesion: Evidence from local areas with significant Muslim populations*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation

[25] DCLG, 2008. *Predictors of community cohesion: multi-level modelling of the 2005 Citizenship Survey.*

[26] Local Government Association, 2002. *Guidance on Community Cohesion*, London: LGA

[27] ICOCO, 2009. Building community cohesion in Britain: Lessons from iCoCo local reviews. Institute of Community Cohesion

backgrounds and avoids resources being divided between cultural groups which can be a source of conflict and tension[28].

One study found that where ethnic-specific community infrastructure was overlaid with other community activities, different groups were brought together who would not usually meet, such as older and younger people and people of different ethnicities[29]. Neighbourhood-based services, such as childcare and parenting groups can be important in bringing people together who share common issues despite other cultural or social differences. Access to communal and local facilities, such as pubs, green spaces and even bus stops can help to create a sense of wider community.[30]

3.1.11 Kinship and friendship

Community cohesion can be increased through kinship and friendship networks as people bond with others living in their area. Research has found that friendship networks were an important source of support for people already resident in the UK who can make friends across different cultural groups. However, newly arrived international migrants are more likely to access kinship networks for help and support[31]. This is partly because newly arrived migrants may not speak English confidently and so can only establish relationships with family members or others who speak the same language. Consequently, language can be a barrier to community cohesion as individuals from different communities may struggle to communicate with one another.

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[28] DCLG, 2008. *Predictors of community cohesion: multi-level modelling of the 2005 Citizenship Survey.*
[29] DCLG, 2008. *Predictors of community cohesion: multi-level modelling of the 2005 Citizenship Survey.*
[30] Hudson, M., Phillips, J., Ray, K. and Barnes, H., 2007. *Social cohesion in diverse communities*. JRF: York
[31] Samad, Y. 2010. *Muslims and community cohesion in Bradford*. JRF: York

4   REFLECTIONS FROM THE HOUSING DIVERSITY NETWORK

A survey and a focus group were carried out with Housing Diversity Network (HDN) members[32] to gather their experience of the challenges they are facing now in relation to community tension and how they are seeking to enable cohesion and resilience. The focus group was held at Southwark Homes on 10th December 2013, with 6 housing providers attending. A further 28 housing providers responded to the survey.

4.1   Ranking of factors affecting community cohesion and community resilience

The survey found that some factors have a greater impact on cohesion and resilience than others. Although the importance of a factor may be dependent on the specific location and demographics of a community, the survey of HDN members found that certain factors are widely considered more important than others as detailed in figure 1.

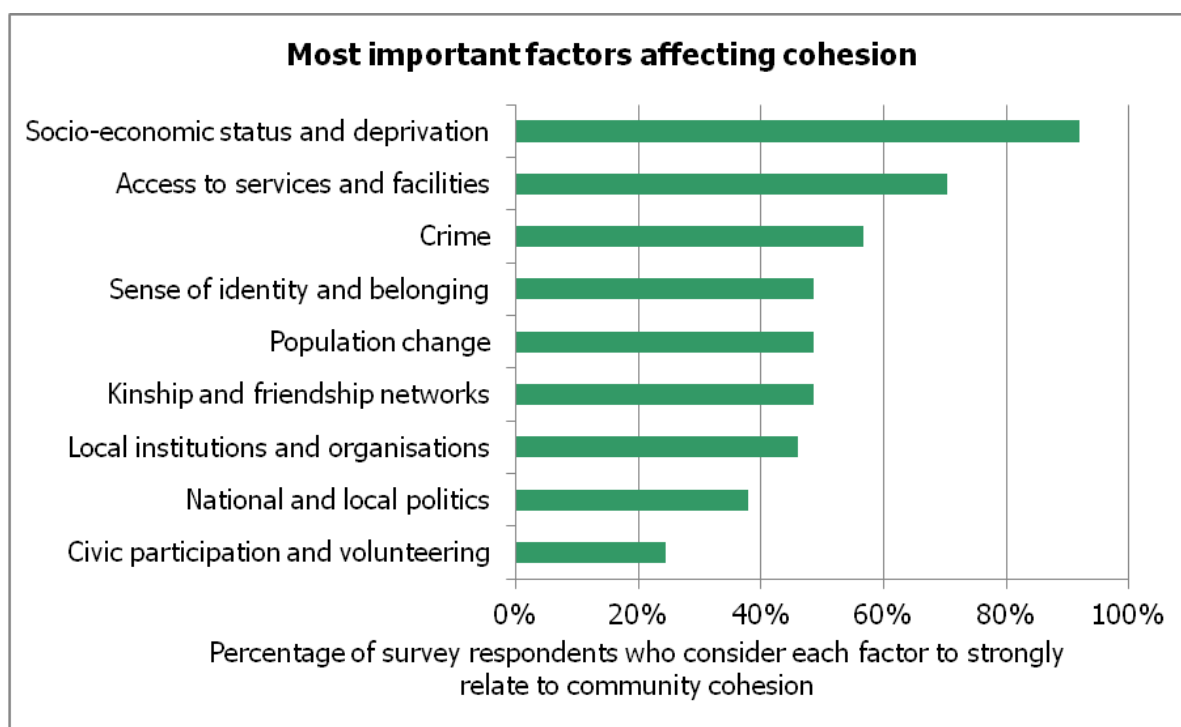**Figure 1: Most important factors affecting cohesion and resilience**

Figure 1 indicates that socio-economic status and deprivation, access to services and facilities, and crime have the greatest impact on community cohesion and resilience. This reflects the move in public policy towards discussing community tension as 'resilience' issues caused by deprivation rather than 'cohesion' problems caused by differences in ethnicity.

Discussion with HDN members at the focus group echoed the findings from the survey. Members commented that ethnic diversity does not seem to be a negative factor in community cohesion, whereas unemployment and a lack of quality employment are far more likely to cause tensions. Housing providers are particularly concerned about the strain placed on community relations by the changes to welfare support and rising inequality.

HDN members raised the importance of addressing community cohesion in rural areas where they perceive the inequality gap to be wider. Members noted that resentment between the 'haves' and 'have nots' causes community tension and that social tenant communities in these areas tend to be more insular. These communities are less likely to be in contact with other cultures or social groups and so in-migration of people of different ethnicities or socio-economic groups may cause greater tension than in urban communities. Tension over access to facilities and employment may also be greater in rural areas due to more limited employment opportunities and public transport.

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[32] See appendix 1 for participating organisations

To address community tension in their local communities, HDN members have been undertaking a range of activities. The majority of these activities focus on mitigating the impact of welfare reform in order to relieve the stress which this has placed on individuals, families and whole communities. Many of the activities involve developing a digital deal to facilitate tenants' access to the internet, gathering intelligence on whether tenants wish to move as a result of the bedroom tax, and providing clear information to tenants' about the changes to the welfare system.

The following case studies provide examples of how HDN members are addressing causes of tension in their communities and seeking to enable resilience. These have been derived from both the focus group and survey.

Initiative: Increasing communities' voice[33], Axiom Housing Association

Axiom Housing Association encourages communities to work together to have a stronger voice over what goes on in their neighbourhood. The housing association provides funding, administrative support and a dedicated Resident Involvement Manager to assist them in this. Axiom links up with schools, the police, and other relevant local bodies to provide holistic support to residents, empowering them to tackle poor services, anti social behaviour and other local issues together. The housing association has also established a Minority Action Group, which aims to support residents who fall under the nine protected characteristics, by working with relevant external groups to ensure these residents' needs are met.

Initiative: Multi-Faith Project[34], Tower Hamlets Homes

The main objective of the Multi-Faith project was to encourage interfaith co-existence and understanding in one of the most ethnically diverse places in the UK. The project involved diverse groups of residents organising festive events for people of faiths different to their own. Mosques hosted Christmas events and churches hosted Eid events, residents of the whole borough took part and members of the community that are not religious were also involved.

Outcomes: This resulted in a greater sense of belonging and ownership due to tenants planning, organising and delivering their own festive events. A significant outcome was that the project managed to bring together two local community groups which had had a strained relationship in the past. Through the project, the two groups worked together to organise food, refreshments, entertainment and publicity for a joint event. The event itself was a success since a mutual understanding of beliefs and cultures and a greater openness developed through the groups working together. One group has since offered the use of their venue to the other group free of charge and both groups have agreed to work together on future events, activities and projects.

Initiative: John Holt Community Centre[35], Bolton at Home

Due to public funding cuts the John Holt community centre was under threat from closure but the local Tenant and Resident Association was determined not to let this happen. Local volunteers came together to form a Community Interest Company and now lease the building from the council. The centre now offers a wide range of services such as work clubs, a community café, weight management and healthy eating classes, coffee mornings for elderly residents, and dance sessions for young people.

Outcomes: The events and activities held at the community centre are an important way of increasing community cohesion. The tenants who volunteer to run the centre have gained self-confidence and new skills and knowledge. The centre has also brought local people, community groups and agencies together and has encouraged more people to get involved in community activities. It also acts as a source of information about services for local residents.

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[33] Information obtained via a survey of housing providers
[34] Information obtained via a survey of housing providers
[35] Bolton at Home, 2013. *Working with communities... to build neighbourhoods we can be proud of.*

Initiative: Neighbourhoods Strategy[36], A2dominion

A2dominion has a neighbourhoods strategy which has a primary objective to bring together communities and offer wider services to tenants. The strategy focuses on 15 areas across A2dominion's stock that present multiple deprivation factors. Some highlights of the programme for 12/13 are:

- Engaged with over 500 children and young people through community events

- 1,200 residents gave feedback on services and programmes through estate based "street meets"

- 250 residents received money advice and guidance;

- 80 residents supported to access training and employment opportunities;

- 2,319 volunteering hours delivered;

- 65% of residents in these areas felt their neighbourhood was improving.

The strategy is based upon strong linkages between A2dominion as a housing provider and the community.

Initiative: Bespoke approach to addressing worklessness[37], Homes in Sedgemoor

Homes in Sedgemoor is a small housing provider with stock largely congregated in rural areas in Somerset. Here the challenge of cohesion is focused around the gaps between the 'haves' and 'have nots' particularly in relation to access to employment and training opportunities. Reflecting the generic approach of the Work Programme, Homes in Sedgemoor have developed a worklessness strategy and bespoke approach to address the gap and bring residents closer to key employers in the area. This has included early engagement activity with the long term unemployed, job clubs, advice around preparation for work and direct brokerage activity.

Initiative: Coordinated approach to the impacts of welfare reform[38], Aster Communities

Aster Communities has a stock of some 27,000 properties across the South and South West. In response to welfare reform they are delivering a strategy which aims to protect the business, alongside supporting customers. This has translated into a number of varied and coordinated activities such as: targeted contact; local events; debt and benefit advice, hot line support; providing comprehensive literature; signposting; and help to move.

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[36] Information obtained via the focus group
[37] Bolton at Home, 2013. *Working with communities... to build neighbourhoods we can be proud of.*
[38] Information obtained via the focus group

5 WIDER PRACTICE

Housing providers are working independently and with other local partners to deliver a range of initiatives to encourage greater cohesion and resilience. Unemployment and welfare reform currently pose a particular threat to community cohesion and resilience and so housing providers are undertaking various activities to mitigate this threat. These include; developing worklessness strategies to engage residents and broker a return to work, educating tenants on welfare changes, facilitating shared occupancy so tenants avoid the bedroom tax, gathering data on whether tenants intend to move to avoid the bedroom tax, and developing a digital deal to increase tenants' internet access.

5.1 Practice from other providers

The following table provides further examples of different approaches which housing providers have taken to address the factors which affect community cohesion and to enable resilience.

Table 1: Interventions to enable cohesion and resilience

Key Factor	Example interventions
Socio-economic status and deprivation	Initiative: Real Opportunities[39], Parkway Green Housing Trust, Manchester The Real Opportunities project in Wythenshawe, South Manchester involves a partnership between the Parkway Green Housing Trust, Manchester Council, Job Centre Plus, the NHS, Manchester College, Greater Manchester Police, and a range of voluntary sector and community organisations. The partnership aims to address worklessness and deprivation in the Wythenshawe area by facilitating young people who are long-term unemployed to access job-seeker support and training opportunities. By bringing together a range of public agencies working in this area, a more cohesive system of employment support has been created to direct unemployed people more efficiently towards the support available. The partnership's 400 public-facing employees, who are drawn from the different organisations, together have a range of skills with which to assist residents to enter employment and overcome barriers to work, such as transport, health, childcare, debt management or housing. Outcome: Joined-up working means that different agencies working with the same individuals can coordinate their work and draw on the expertise of different staff to increase the take-up of employment support services. The Partnership also runs 'get hired' events which promote employment support to residents. Within eight weeks of an event in September 2011, 200 of those who attended had already started work, and a further 75 had had their first advice session. Enabling residents to enter work or training should give residents greater financial security and reduce the likelihood of community tension arising from households having stretched resources and feeling economically excluded.

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[39] Inside Housing, 2012. *The Riot Report: How housing providers are building stronger communities*, Inside Housing, National Housing Federation, and Chartered Institute of Housing

National and local politics	Initiative: Gateshead Together Week[40], The Gateshead Housing Company
	As part of the Cohesion Strategy for all Gateshead partner organisations, the Gateshead Housing Company holds an annual Gateshead Together Week. This addresses some of the myths and fears about other ethnic groups which are sometimes exaggerated and exploited by local or national politics. The week involves a range of community cultural events, such as resident visits to mosques, school linkage projects and interfaith football tournaments.
Sense of identity and belonging	Initiative: School Linking Network[41], Stockport Ethnic Diversity Service and Stockport Homes
	Stockport Homes supports the School Linking Network in Stockport which aims to facilitate links between schools to help children and young people to explore their identity. The project aims to celebrate diversity and develop dialogue between children from different ethnic groups. Children participating in the project explore the themes of identity, diversity, equality and community, using four key questions: 'Who am I?', 'Who are we?', 'Where do we live?', and 'How do we all live together?' Primary Schools are matched with a suitable contrasting link school by taking into account the ethnicity of pupils, special educational needs, religious / non-religious nature of schools, socio-economic differences, and urban-rural differences.
Crime	Initiative: Family Intervention Project[42], Stafford and Rural Homes
	In 2010, Stafford and Rural Homes began a family intervention project to address some of the underlying causes of anti-social behaviour in the area. Support workers were employed to help adults and children to improve their confidence and self-esteem and address issues of substance abuse. The aim of providing personalised emotional support to families was to create a positive change in people's behaviour and attitude which could result in better family and community relations.
	Outcomes: During the project's operation, there were no anti-social behaviour-related evictions from Stafford and Rural Homes' properties and there was an overall reduction in anti-social behaviour. Some individuals who had a history of criminal behaviour dramatically improved their behaviour following participation in the project. The project is thought to have generated significant savings for the criminal justice system and social services by reducing the number of incidents of anti-social behaviour. Lower crime rates and better community relations result in greater community cohesion as residents feel they can trust one another more.
Civic participation and volunteering	Initiative: The Neighbourhood Approach[43], Aster Communities
	Aster Communities' Neighbourhood Approach seeks to improve community cohesion by devolving some responsibility for community investment to residents' community panels. 28 community panels were set up with the power to invest £448,000 across Aster Communities Regions in a needs-led targeted way. Some of the projects which have been established using this funding include education and training projects, social enterprise initiatives, and environmental projects. The project has resulted in needs-led

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[40] Information obtained via a survey of housing providers
[41] Information obtained via a survey of housing providers
[42] Inside Housing, 2012. *The Riot Report: How housing providers are building stronger communities*, Inside Housing, National Housing Federation, and Chartered Institute of Housing
[43] Information obtained via a survey of housing providers

	targeted investment in local communities. The initiatives which have been funded through the project are supporting residents to be work ready and to move back into employment through a variety of mechanisms.
Local institutions and organisations	Initiative: Moneywise Gurus and Local Community Groups[44], Calico Homes, Lancashire The Moneywise Gurus project is led by local members of the community who have undergone comprehensive training around welfare reform and financial issues that may affect their neighbourhoods. The training means they are able to support their neighbours and people they meet in the community who are having financial difficulties. Local community groups are also supported with their core running costs and Calico Homes staff help community groups to run local events and activities for the community. Local meetings are also held where residents can come together with service providers to discuss and resolve issues which matter to the people who live there. This helps neighbourhoods to be more cohesive and to solve any problems they have by working together.
Access to services and facilities	Initiative: Pathways to Progress[45], Catalyst Gateway, London The Pathways to Progress programme run by Catalyst Gateway in London provides support to 12 – 25 year olds in London to develop new interests. Between 2008 and 2010, the programme helped more than 600 young people to take-up new activities, learn new skills and develop their talents. The aim of the programme was to encourage young people to access local facilities and organisations which would enable them to develop skills outside of formal education. The project aimed to raise young people's self-esteem and motivation and encourage them to be engaged with others in their area in a positive manner. Outcomes: As a result of the project, there was a 10% reduction in the time young people spent unsupervised out of their home. This is thought to have contributed to reducing anti-social behaviour in West London. The project also created community mentors who mediate conflicts between peer groups and serious group offenders (street gangs). A survey of residents in the area in which the project operated found that 65% of residents felt that this had had a positive effect on their community.
Kinship and friendship networks	Initiative: ESOL classes[46], Leeds Housing In order to facilitate the formation of friendship networks between residents and to assist residents to become more independent, Leeds Housing provides ESOL classes. As a result of residents improving their English language skills, they can access services more easily and attend women's community groups. Other initiatives implemented by Leeds Housing to build friendship networks and promote cohesion include a Hate Crime awareness-raising event, a disabled customer's forum and an LGBT community group.

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[44] Information obtained via a survey of housing providers
[45] Inside Housing, 2012. *The Riot Report: How housing providers are building stronger communities*, Inside Housing, National Housing Federation, and Chartered Institute of Housing.
[46] Information obtained via a survey of housing providers

6   RECOMMENDATIONS

Community cohesion does not necessarily mean that there is an absence of conflict but that the community has 'a collective ability to manage the shifting array of tensions and disagreements'[47]. This means that for a community to be cohesive and resilient there must be positive social relationships across different social groups so that there are opportunities for conflict or animosity to be openly addressed. Housing providers can play an important role in providing space and opportunities for people from different backgrounds to mix and form the positive relationships necessary for a community to be cohesive and resilient.

The typology of factors influencing community cohesion and resilience also demonstrates that tension most often arises when there is material disadvantage and limited life opportunities. Groups who are experiencing social exclusion, whether this be a limited capacity to pay for goods and services or a limited ability to participate in social activities, are most likely to resent other groups which enjoy greater inclusion in society. Consequently, it is important for housing providers to work with government and other local stakeholders to identify how and why certain groups are socially excluded, and develop interventions to promote their inclusion[48].

Drawing on the practice guide to community cohesion and housing and the findings of the research work with HDN members, the following are seven ways in which housing providers can have a role in promoting community cohesion and community resilience:

Assessing housing needs
Housing providers could undertake research and consultation with different local communities to understand their housing aspirations and changing needs. Having a strong understanding of the housing needs of different groups can increase a housing organisation's ability to provide an adequate supply of appropriate housing within their housing stock.

Balancing competing demands
Community tension can arise when one group feels that another group has preferential access to basic resources, such as housing. Housing providers therefore have a responsibility to ensure that policies and practices for allocating housing are scrupulously fair, transparent and clearly communicated to housing applicants.

Improving choice in social housing
Physical segregation in housing can occur when vulnerable or disadvantaged groups lack support in making housing choices. Providing support and advice on the housing options available and making application procedures as simple as possible can help all groups to make fully informed housing choices. Housing providers can also actively encourage and support social groups to move into 'new' areas to improve the demographic mix of neighbourhoods.

Promoting equal access and providing additional housing 'pathways'
To increase the housing options of all social groups and make affordable housing more readily available, housing providers can explore alternative housing pathways. Thinking creatively about how people can access housing, for example, self-help renovation schemes and access to alternative finance can enable people from different social groups to have greater access to this basic resource.

Dealing with poor housing conditions
Social groups who live in particularly poor quality housing are likely to feel resentment towards others who have access to far better quality housing, especially if they perceive others to have unfair advantages. To reduce the likelihood of resentment and tension arising, housing providers can work to improve the standard of all the properties they lease so that all groups feel satisfied by the basic standard of the housing available to them.

Managing neighbourhoods
The majority of the factors influencing community cohesion and resilience relate to opportunities for different social groups to interact. Housing providers can provide space for community groups to meet and hold events so that people from different backgrounds can form friendships. Housing

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[47] Gilchrist, A. 2004. *Community Cohesion and Community Development: Bridges or Barricades?*. London: Community Development Foundation in association with Runnymede Trust
[48] Hudson, M., Phillips, J., Ray, K. and Barnes, H., 2007. *Social cohesion in diverse communities*. JRF: York

providers can also encourage all social groups to participate in decision-making and tenant associations so that all groups' have an opportunity to have their needs addressed.

Developing targets and monitoring results

Community dynamics are constantly changing and so encouraging community cohesion and enabling resilience is an on-going process. Housing providers should develop targets and monitor indicators for community cohesion and resilience in their localities so that they can respond quickly and effectively to any emerging risks to community cohesion and resilience. The framework (detailed in Appendix 3), which has been developed from the typology and literature review, provides housing providers with a basic outline of the indicators which they could monitor in order to remain aware of community cohesion and resilience issues in their locality.

This report not only demonstrates the positive impact that the majority of housing providers are having on enabling community cohesion and resilience but, even more importantly, provides a source of new ideas and a clear framework for those organisations who want to do even more.

APPENDIX 1

Participants in research

PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH

Respondents to survey

- Gentoo Housing Group
- Incommunities
- Places for People Group
- Community Gateway Association
- A2Dominion
- South Yorkshire Housing Association
- Bernicia Group
- Wythenshawe Community Housing Group
- Aster Communities
- Broadacres Housing
- B3Living
- Southwark Council
- Aldwyck HG
- Leeds Housing
- Walsall Housing Group
- Berneslai Homes
- The Gateshead Housing Company
- Calico Homes Ltd
- Tower Hamlets Homes
- Aksa Homes
- LYHA
- Axiom Housing Association
- Severnside Housing
- Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing
- Alliance Homes
- Stockport Homes
- Hyndburn Homes
- Hull City Council
- Bolton at Home

Participants in focus group

- Homes in Sedgemoor
- A2Dominion
- Sutton Housing Partnership
- The Barnet Group
- Raglan Housing Association
- Aster Communities

APPENDIX 2

Historical context to community cohesion and resilience

HISTORICAL CONTEXT TO COMMUNITY COHESION AND RESILIENCE

Background to community cohesion

The concept of community cohesion came to the forefront of public policy following the 2001 riots in Burnley, Oldham and Bradford. The riots concerned people from different cultural backgrounds and involved violence in the streets, clashes with the police and destruction of property. As a result of the disturbances, the government commissioned a series of reports to identify the causes of the unrest and set up a panel to review the problems and make national level recommendations. The panel produced the report 'Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team'[49], which is often called the 'Cantle Report' and was very important in framing the cohesion agenda in the following years[50]. The report concluded that a key cause of the tensions was the residential and institutional segregation between local communities. It described the danger of divided communities living 'parallel lives', which is a term which has shaped the cohesion discourse ever since[51].

Four years later the 7/7 London bombings placed government policy on cohesion in the spotlight again[52]. In response, the government established the Commission on Integration and Cohesion and cohesion was reinforced as a term to describe relations between ethnic minorities, in particular Muslim communities and white British communities. In 2007, the Commission produced the report Our Shared Future[53] which set out recommendations for increasing community cohesion. The report describes a cohesive community as one in which "there is a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and different communities to a future vision for a neighbourhood, city, region or country". It suggests that a "sense of belonging" means that individuals identify with the place they live, feel pride in it and are confident that local institutions act fairly and openly[54]. Following this report, the government adopted two approaches to address cohesion; mainstreaming the principles of cohesion into all government work and implementing targeted interventions to bring people together and create a sense of belonging[55].

As the cohesion agenda has developed, greater importance has been placed on shared citizenship. The term has begun to acknowledge that community tension can arise between different socio-economic groups and as a result of disadvantage and deprivation. The London Riots of 2011 brought into sharp context how a lack of shared citizenship can result from marked inequality and deprivation and that this can result in very real community tension. Despite differences in the analysis of the causes of the riots, it was broadly recognised that addressing economic inequality would be important for preventing future disturbances. The Institute of Community Cohesion (ICoCo) now emphasises tackling inequalities as a key component of promoting community cohesion. The institute proposes that community cohesion interventions should address areas and aspects of disadvantage[56].

In discussing community cohesion and tension, it is important to note that ethnicity is not the only issue. Divisions within communities are commonly due to age, generation, socio-economic group and even gender. For example, resentment towards particular groups within a community has been found to be directed towards young people, poor people and young men, as well as new migrant groups.[57]

Cohesion and housing

As the cohesion agenda has developed, the housing sector has responded accordingly, producing strategies and guidance for how housing providers can promote community cohesion. In 2007, the Housing

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[49] The Home Office, 2001. *The Cantle Report - Community Cohesion: a report of the Independent Review Team*, http://resources.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Publications/Documents/Document/DownloadDocumentsFile.aspx?recordId=96&file=PDFversion

[50] Cock, J.C.. 2010. *Evaluating the Impact of Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations on Community Cohesion*, Goldsmiths College and Praxis

[51] The Guardian, 2011. *What is community cohesion and why is it important?*, http://www.theguardian.com/housing-network/2011/mar/21/community-cohesion-definition-measuring

[52] The Guardian, 2011. *What is community cohesion and why is it important?*, http://www.theguardian.com/housing-network/2011/mar/21/community-cohesion-definition-measuring

[53] Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007. *Our Shared Future*, http://resources.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Publications/Documents/Document/DownloadDocumentsFile.aspx?recordId=18&file=PDFversion

[54] Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2010. *Promoting Community Cohesion: The Role of Extended Services*

[55] Cock, J.C., 2010. *Evaluating the Impact of Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations on Community Cohesion*, Goldsmiths College and Praxis

[56] ICOCO, *The Nature of Community Cohesion*, http://www.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Resources/Toolkits/Health/TheNatureOfCommunityCohesion

[57] Hudson, M., Phillips, J., Ray, K. and Barnes, H., 2007. *Social cohesion in diverse communities*. JRF: York

Corporation (now part of the Homes and Communities Agency) published a cohesion strategy for housing, Our Shared Places[58]. The strategy acknowledged that housing providers cannot resolve local cohesion problems working on their own and that cohesion is more than simply faith, race and poverty[59].

Since this report, the Chartered Institute of Housing has commissioned a number of reviews and reports which aimed to examine how social landlords can contribute to greater community cohesion[60]. These reports form a body of good practice for promoting community cohesion through housing management. In 2007 the Chartered Institute for Housing produced a guidebook[61] for housing organisations, professionals and residents to encourage them to work together to increase cohesion in their locality.

Overall, community cohesion is seen to be an important issue for housing providers because incidents of poor cohesion often occur in deprived areas which have a large stock of social housing. There are clear incentives for social landlords to address causes of tension among their residents because this is likely to create more stable communities and reduce anti-social behaviour, crime and other neighbourhood problems. As influential organisations which have close contact with communities, housing providers are an important partner in government-led efforts to promote greater community cohesion.

Important incidents of breakdown in community cohesion

There have been some very significant incidents in the last decade which have brought policy on community relations under the spotlight. This section discusses the Bradford, Burnley and Oldham confrontations and the London riots to explore how housing providers and other bodies responded to the disturbances.

Oldham, Burnley and Bradford Riots

From April to July 2001, the towns of Oldham, Burnley and Bradford experienced violent clashes between young Asians and the police. The peak of the riots from the 7th – 9th July in Bradford resulted in 200 police officers being injured. The unrest was linked to increased racial violence in the area, long-standing mistrust of the police, the overt presence of the BNP and other far right groups, and persistent poverty and unemployment[62].

Following the riots, reviews into the causes of incidents and the inter-ethnic problems in the towns were undertaken. The Ritchie Report, named after David Ritchie, Chairman of the Oldham Independent Review was published in December 2001. The report concluded that deep-rooted segregation between ethnic groups was largely the cause of the inter-ethnic tension. In terms of housing, the report found that Oldham Council's attempts to mix Asian and white families in Council properties had largely failed due to racist attitudes towards incoming Asian families. The typically larger size of Asian families also restricted the Council properties available to them which meant that white families were often able to be housed more quickly than Asian families.

The report recommended that there should be a targeted programme of housing clearance and replacement, focused on Asian and white areas, in order to achieve racially mixed schemes of private and socially rented housing. The report also suggested trying group letting, in which several Asian or white families are housed in non-traditional areas. Additional issues, such as littering which create community tension should be addressed using education and enforcement in order to improve the quality of the living environment. Numerous other recommendations were made targeted at education, policing, health and creating shared community groups and events which aimed to reduce poverty and deprivation and increase cross-cultural mixing.

Following the disturbances, housing providers in the three towns took action to address the inter-ethnic tension in their communities. A report published by the Chartered Institute of Housing in June 2001 into why so few Asian people were living in social housing in Bradford found that Asian people viewed social housing providers as 'white institutions'. To address this issue, Bradford Community Housing Trust (as they were

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[58] Housing Corporation, 2007. *Our Shared Places: Community Cohesion Strategy*

[59] The Guardian, 2011. *What is community cohesion and why is it important?*, http://www.theguardian.com/housing-network/2011/mar/21/community-cohesion-definition-measuring

[60] For example, Robinson, D., Coward, S., Fordham, T., Green, S. and Reeve, K. 2004. *How Housing Management can Contribute to Community Cohesion – A Research Report*. Coventry: Chartered Institute of Housing; Perry, J. and Blackaby, B. 2004. *Community Cohesion and Housing: A Good Practice Guide*. Coventry: Chartered Institute of Housing; Fotheringham, D and Perry, J. 2003. *Offering Communities Real Choice – Lettings and Community Cohesion*. Coventry: Chartered Institute of Housing

[61] Perry, J. and Blackaby, B. 2007. *Community Cohesion and Housing: A Good Practice Guide*, Chartered Institute for Housing

[62] Ray, L. and Smith, D. 2002. Racist Offending, Policing and Community Conflict, paper presented to the *British Sociological Association Conference*.

then known) began working with Manningham Housing Association to develop homes for minority ethnic residents in predominantly white areas. The move was part of a strategic partnering agreement between BCHT, Manningham and Nashayman Housing Association to achieve community cohesion. The project received £80,000 in funding from the Housing Corporation innovation and good practice grant[63].

Another initiative to improve cohesion after the riots was led by Incommunities, an organisation made up of six local housing providers to manage housing stock transferred to them by Bradford Council. A key priority of the joint venture is to create mixed and cohesive communities[64]. Similarly, in Oldham the Aksa Housing Association recognised the importance of providing housing for all at a time of overt discrimination and a housing shortage. Aksa have stated that they aim to build cohesive communities, not just homes[65].

London Riots

The London riots in August 2011 were markedly different to the race riots in the northern towns in 2001. The riots, which began in London and then spread nationwide, involved individuals from a range of ethnic groups who had differing motives for taking part. Reports into the riots have identified a range of causes for the violence, including discontentment with the police, high unemployment rates, a polarised wage economy and squeezed public services[66].

During the riots, some housing providers were forced to respond to disturbances affecting their tenants. In Salford, Salix Homes already had a '1st Response Service' in place for monitoring and reporting anti-social behaviour and emergency repairs[67]. When the riots reached Salford, Salix Homes worked with the police to use their 1st Response Service to monitor the situation and keep tenants and their properties safe. The day after the riots, Salix Homes staff visited their tenants in the affected areas to offer support and assistance.

Following the riots, a Riots, Communities and Victims Panel was set-up to investigate the causes of the riots and make recommendations for the recovery process. The panel's interim report[68] following the riots provided a series of recommendations for rebuilding communities and preventing future riots. The report highlighted the importance of creating strong alliances between organisations and individuals who would be able to assist in preventing further rioting. These include youth groups, religious leaders, local authorities and housing providers. The report recommended that local authorities should ask housing providers to work with them to prevent disturbances and all front-line workers should be engaged when there is a risk of public disorder.

An example of how one housing association responded to the London riots is the Momentum[69] initiative. This was a project led by L&Q housing association together with ten of London's other housing providers, the Metropolitan Police, Croydon Council and Elevating Success. The project, which aimed to reduce knife and gang crime, consisted of an event to educate young people about the dangers and consequences of gang culture. At the same time, the event sought to challenge the negative perceptions of London's youth by showcasing their talents, achievements and the positive contribution many young people make to their local communities. The young people who take part also have the opportunity to meet and discuss their future with experts, speak to potential employers and enjoy an afternoon filled with workshops and live performances.

The London riots highlighted the importance of housing providers in managing community tension since housing officers have direct contact with many of the individuals who were victims of the riots as well as those who committed offences. This underlines the importance of housing providers working in partnership with local authorities, the police and community organisations to develop a joined-up approach to promoting community cohesion.

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[63] Inside Housing, 2003. *Trust Aims to Break Barriers*, Available at: http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/trust-aims-to-break-barriers/126168.article
[64] Shafi, F. 2009, *The Bradford Community Guide*, Available at: http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/bradford-community-guide-jan2010.pdf
[65] 24dash.com, 2011. *Housing in Oldham: 10 years on from the race riots*, Available at: http://www.24dash.com/news/housing/2011-05-05-housing-in-oldham-10-years-on-from-the-race-riots
[66] Inside Housing, 2012. *The Riot Report: How housing providers are building stronger communities*, Inside Housing, National Housing Federation, and Chartered Institute of Housing.
[67] Inside Housing, 2012. *The Riot Report: How housing providers are building stronger communities*, Inside Housing, National Housing Federation, and Chartered Institute of Housing.
[68] The Riots, Communities and Victims Panel, 2011. *5 Days in August: An interim report on the 2011 English riots.*
[69] L&Q London Housing Association, 2012. *Housing associations and partners unite to tackle knife crime in the capital.* [Online] Available at:http://www.lqgroup.org.uk/services-for-residents/media-centre/press-releases/2012/10/15/housing-associations-and-partners-unite-to-tackle-knife-crime-in-the-capital/

APPENDIX 3

Framework for assessing and promoting community cohesion and resilience

Table 2: Framework for assessing and promoting community cohesion and resilience

Factors affecting community cohesion	Description	Indicator	Action housing providers can take
Socio-economic status and deprivation	Job insecurity and limited access to goods and services creates animosity and scape-goating. Tensions can develop between residents when people feel they are competing for limited resources, such as employment and housing.	▷ Unemployment ▷ Poor quality employment ▷ Low incomes ▷ High or increased uptake of welfare benefits ▷ Low education levels	➤ Communicating changes to welfare benefits to help tenants to prepare for a potential decrease in income. ➤ Be a living-wage employer. ➤ Offer local people apprenticeships and training opportunities. ➤ Increase availability of computers and internet and provide ICT skills training. ➤ Ensure transparent and fair distribution of housing.
Ethnic diversity	Community tension between different ethnic groups can occur when there is limited interaction between the new and existing communities and where the existing residents feel their culture or economic resources are threatened by the in-migration of a new community.	▷ Sharp changes in the ethnicity of a local population ▷ High or increasing deprivation ▷ Physical segregation of ethnic groups	➤ Create opportunities for people from different ethnic groups to mix and become friends, e.g. organising leisure activities for older people, mother and toddler groups, youth sport groups etc. This is often more successful if the group leaders represent different ethnic groups. ➤ Provide an opportunity for existing residents to voice their concerns and provide information to dissolve myths. ➤ Ensure the housing application procedure is simple and transparent and enables people from all ethnic groups a wide choice of the areas they can live in.

National and local politics	Negative attitudes towards particular social groups can be fuelled by national or local level politics. The rise of extremist political organisations at local elections can spread animosity between particular groups which damages community cohesion. The media has been found to drive such negative attitudes through inaccurate, politicised reports.	▷ A rise in the strength of extremist political groups ▷ Political campaigning on divisive issues in local areas ▷ National programmes and policies perceived to unfairly target specific social groups ▷ UK foreign policy perceived to unfairly target particular nationalities, ethnicities or religious groups.	➢ Be vigilant to the presence of hate crime and racist literature being distributed. ➢ Work with the police to monitor rising political tensions.
Population change	Population churn due to the arrival of new ethnic groups in areas with previously low levels of in-migration or new socio-economic groups can disrupt community relations. Population churn usually affects the local housing market which can cause problems for existing residents.	▷ A change in the local demographic profile ▷ A change in the local housing market	➢ Create opportunities for people from existing and new communities to mix and become friends. Younger residents from different communities are likely to mix more easily and so initiatives focused on the older generations are most important. ➢ Ensuring there is equal access to shared services is also important to mitigate resentment rising towards new communities.
Sense of identity and belonging	Individuals within a community may feel that their identity is threatened by the presence of a new group living in the same area and so resentment towards the newcomers can arise. This sense of cultural threat may be heightened by the presence of institutions related to a specific faith or cultural group and a perceived lack of openness may breed community tension.	▷ A change in the demographics of local population – in particular; age, ethnicity, or socio-economic group.	➢ Intercultural events are important for breaking down myths about other cultural practices. Community events, such as a local food and music festival can enable different cultural groups to share their culture with others and create openness about differences. ➢ Creating a project which requires groups to work together can address animosity towards other cultures. For example, encouraging local religious groups to share their facilities and host a joint event can bring people from different communities together.

Physical segregation	Factors such as a lack of unaffordable housing or fear of harassment can determine where different groups choose to live and can lead to frustration at not being able to access better housing in better areas. The resulting physical segregation of ethnic groups can lead to tension between them.	▷ The demographics of housing tenants – areas of housing with homogenous tenant population in terms of ethnicity, age or socio-economic status.	➢ Projects to ensure all prospective tenants are aware of all the available housing options are important to maintain a culture of transparency and openness. ➢ Access to services and facilities in physically isolated areas can be a challenge and so providing a local transport option could overcome this.
Crime	Crime and fear of crime strongly undermine community cohesion. Fear of being a victim of crime or a racist attack has been found to be especially damaging to community cohesion in areas with large White and large Pakistani and Bangladeshi populations.	▷ High or rising local crime rates locally- especially hate crime and violent crime. ▷ High or rising levels of fear of crime.	➢ Work closely with the police, especially with community police officers to coordinate strategies for reducing crime locally. ➢ Work with the police to identify ways in which housing providers and their front-line staff can reduce crime and protect residents, e.g. installing extra lighting, ensuring properties are secure etc.
Civic participation and volunteering	If individuals feel unable to engage with local authorities or other local organisations, cohesion is likely to be low. Volunteering can improve cohesion by making individuals feel empowered and helping them to form friendships with people in their community who they would not otherwise know.	▷ The participation of tenants in tenants' associations. ▷ The reach of local voluntary organisations to all community groups. ▷ The diversity of the demographic profile of local volunteers.	➢ Housing providers can create numerous opportunities for volunteering in a range of roles. Volunteering which targets all age ranges is important and volunteering which enables volunteers to gain a vocational skill may also facilitate access to employment. ➢ Tenants' associations often attract a particular demographic. Housing providers should engage with under-represented groups to encourage them to participate in tenants' associations too.

Local institutions and organisations	Sports and leisure facilities, schools, and other local institutions can help to bring people together. Community and voluntary sector organisations are also important for creating spaces in which people of different backgrounds can get to know one another.	▷ The strength of the local community and voluntary sector. ▷ Equal access of all groups to local facilities and institutions. ▷ The diversity of the demographic profile of people using local institutions and facilities.	➢ Housing providers can support local community organisations financially and by offering a location to meet or facilities they can use. ➢ Housing providers can also partner with local institutions and organisations to share information and develop joint strategies to tackle local cohesion issues together.
Access to services and facilities	In communities where access to facilities and services is perceived to favour one group over another, resentment can grow. This is especially likely in areas of deprivation where there is a high level of dependency on local services and facilities and where the supply of such support is stretched.	▷ The availability of local facilities, services and spaces for leisure and socialising. ▷ High or increasing levels of deprivation. ▷ Insufficient or decreasing availability of local support services. ▷ Cuts to the funding of public services and voluntary sector organisations.	➢ Where possible, housing providers can identify gaps in local service provision and offer additional services to fill this gap. This could include creating shared communal spaces, such as a park or community centre. ➢ Housing providers can also facilitate physical access to services by organising resident transport to a service or facility. This may be particularly useful for residents with mobility difficulties or residents in rural areas.
Kinship and friendship networks	Community cohesion can be increased through kinship and friendship networks as people bond with others living in their area. Friendship networks are an important source of support for people already resident in the UK. Newly arrived international migrants are more likely to access kinship networks for support, sometimes because they do not speak English confidently.	▷ The local availability of spaces and groups where people can socialise and form friendships. ▷ High numbers of residents who are unable to communicate proficiently in English. ▷ The local availability of free or low-cost ESOL (English as a second language) classes.	➢ Ensure information is available in different languages so that all tenants can access local services and facilities. ➢ Promote or provide ESOL classes to tenants whose English is not yet proficient.